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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 TEL AVIV 000555

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [IAEA](#) [UNSC](#) [PTER](#) [IR](#) [RU](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: IRAN-IAEA: UNDER SECRETARY JOSEPH'S DISCUSSIONS
WITH ISRAELI GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS (CABLE 2 OF 4)

REF: A. TEL AVIV 00553

[1](#)B. TEL AVIV 00554

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones. Reasons: 1.4 (b)(d).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (S) During his January 30 - February 2 visit to Israel, Under Secretary Robert Joseph participated in talks with Israeli representatives from the MFA, MOD, Israeli Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) and affiliated research centers, IDF intelligence (IDI), and the Mossad. Discussions focused on the threats posed to Israel and the international community by Iran, North Korea, Syria, and terrorist groups operating in Lebanon and the region. Under Secretary Joseph was accompanied by Ambassador Jones, Assistant Secretary John Rood, DOE/NNSA Deputy Administrator William Tobey, and T Senior Advisor James Timbie. This cable, the second of four on Iran from a three-hour interagency meeting at the MFA, focuses on discussions about Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

[1](#)2. (S) The main points the Under Secretary's Israeli interlocutors made are as follows:

-- Israel shares U.S. frustration with the IAEA and Director General El-Baradei. El-Baradei and the Europeans seem ready to jump at any opportunity to begin negotiations with the Iranians, and accommodate them. El-Baradei and his Secretariat need to be constantly monitored and prodded so

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that their reports are accurate and do not "gloss over" serious discrepancies. Israel is concerned the IAEA will take steps to ensure that its reports do not in any way suggest that Iran is avoiding its obligations to the UNSC.

-- Within the IAEA, the Europeans have submitted proposals for technical cooperation on nuclear issues with Iran. Serious consideration should be given to having all such cooperative activities "frozen" -- if necessary, based on a recommendation by IAEA safeguards investigators. Iranian scientists should be barred from participating in certain IAEA conferences and symposia.

-- Iran is reaching out to Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) states for help with technology, especially in the area of heavy water reactors. The IAEA could discourage cooperation by extending its inspections to the over 8,000 factories that Iran has in Kasham which are producing parts for its nuclear

weapons program.

Under Secretary Joseph agreed that U.S. and Israeli experts should continue to meet in Vienna and Washington to coordinate activities within the IAEA on Iran, and that efforts should continue to keep IAEA reporting accurate. He agreed that efforts should be taken to prevent Iran from using the IAEA as a means to gain technology or know-how for its nuclear weapons program. END SUMMARY.

CURRENT SITUATION IN THE IAEA RE: IRAN

13. (S) Reftels report on discussions concerning Iran's nuclear program during a January 30 dinner with Israeli MFA DG Abramovitch, and the first part of January 31 interagency talks at the MFA concerning the internal situation in Iran, and the effects of sanctions to date on that country. Discussion at the MFA then shifted to addressing the Iran nuclear problem within the IAEA.

14. (S) MFA Arms Control Department Director Alon Bar said Israel shares U.S. frustration with the IAEA and its direction on Iran, and has been wondering how the IAEA can be used constructively on the Iran nuclear issue. He stressed that within the IAEA context, the U.S. and Israel need to give as broad as possible interpretation of a freeze of technical activities. He noted that in recent talks with U.S. officials in Vienna, Israel had raised the notion of prohibiting Iran's involvement in certain activities. He suggested that one possible solution would be to use safeguards experts to cast doubt on Iran's declarations. Bar warned that there are indications that IAEA Director General (DG) Mohammed El-Baradei will accept some enrichment in Iran, and that he is not interested in enhancing safeguards

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verification. Bar observed that it might require a new "finding" from the U.S. to counter El-Baradei's inclinations.

15. (S) Gil Reich from the IAEC said that as a result of his discussions in Vienna, he is under the impression that the U.S. will not find acceptable the IAEA Secretariat's next report on Iran in mid-February. El-Baradei reportedly told his people in the Secretariat to be as specific as possible in their report, and make no mention of anything connected to UN Security Council (UNSC) sanctions -- a clear indication to Reich that El-Baradei is trying to limit UNSC sanctions. Reich said that he learned from IAEA DG El-Baradei's advisors that they had also received proposals for technical cooperation with Iran from France and Australia. Reich said that Israel would like to see if it would be possible to have Iranian scientists banned from IAEA seminars and symposia, especially seminars on enrichment and heavy-water reactors. Reich predicted that the IAEA's role on the Iran nuclear issue will, in March, reach a zenith, especially as Western influence on the IAEA and DG El-Baradei appears to be declining. Reich observed that at the recent Davos Forum, El-Baradei showed no changes from the path he has been taking over the last 2-3 years: He is willing to accept Iran conducting research and development and possessing an enrichment capability on its territory with Russian support. El-Baradei appears to have some problems with his assistants in the Safeguards Committee, but is impervious to influence by his Canadian public relations advisor.

16. (S) Under Secretary Joseph said in reply that the USG view is that, with the exception of what is explicitly permitted under UNSCR 1737, all technical cooperation should cease. Under Secretary Joseph wondered if we should focus on stopping certain Iranian projects on their priority list. Reich responded that the U.S. and Israel should develop their approach based on the importance the Iranians assign to projects. Under Secretary Joseph noted that many technical projects that Iran is pursuing are not technically important,

but have symbolic value. He suggested expert-level discussions on the way ahead.

¶7. (S) IDI LTCOL Shai Shevtai said that Iran is seeking independent sources of technology from Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries, including access to technology on heavy-water reactors. He observed that having the IAEA inspect Iran's 8,000 factories in Kasham would have a significant impact, as they produce parts for Iran's nuclear weapons program.

¶8. (S) Assistant Secretary Rood said that depending on the IAEA Secretariat's report on technical cooperation projects, the U.S. would be willing to refer the report to the Board of Governors (BOG) for review. Rood cautioned that it is not certain where debate in the BOG would go. While the Europeans and the U.S. are like minded in their desire to harass Iran, nobody would want to lose a vote.

NEXT STEPS: KEEPING THE IAEA HONEST

¶9. (S) LTCOL Shevtai from IDI said that there are two current possibilities before the international community:

A) Iran declares that it has suspended its enrichment activities, per UNSCR 1737; or

B) Iran declares that it has made a breakthrough in its nuclear program. Whether or not what it declares is truthful is of lesser importance. The danger is that by declaring a breakthrough, it might encourage countries to take fallback positions that essentially allow Iran to have a nuclear weapons program -- even when Iran is still in a position to be denied such a program.

Shevtai urged that the U.S. and Israel work to address these possible outcomes before they happen, and warned that IAEA DG El-Baradei -- if faced with either of these -- would likely try to accommodate Iran.

¶10. (S) Under Secretary Joseph listed what he termed obvious next steps for the USG within the IAEA:

A) Working within the IAEA to limit technical cooperation with Iran to a minimum.

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B) Working with the IAEA to ensure that its reports reflect the facts.

C) Seeking the denial of Iranian scientific participation in relevant IAEA-run seminars and symposia.

The Under Secretary agreed that Israeli and U.S. experts should continue to consult in Vienna and Washington.

¶11. (U) Under Secretary Robert Joseph has cleared on this cable.

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JONES